NEWS FROM ED MARKEY

United States Congress   Massachusetts Seventh District

EPA'S MERCURY PROPOSAL ENDANGERS PUBLIC HEALTH

Washington, D. C. – Today Rep. Edward J. Markey (D- MA), a senior Democrat on the Energy and Commerce and Resources Committees, released the following statement in reaction to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposal to use a trading program to control mercury emissions from power plants.

"It looks like the Bush EPA is up to the same old tricks – rolling back clean air rules for the benefit of polluters at the cost of public health. Mercury is a known public health hazard, causing developmental problems in children across the nation. In Massachusetts and forty other states, fish from some waterways cannot be eaten because they contain dangerous mercury levels, and thousands of pregnant women across America have mercury blood levels the EPA considers dangerous.

"Confronted with these ominous facts, the Bush White House and EPA have chosen to abandon requirements adopted under Clinton Administration and upheld by the federal courts that require the installation of mercury pollution controls on all polluting facilities. The Bush Administration has ditched these rules in favor of a trading program that would leave some smokestacks untouched and free to continue poisoning the air with mercury. In early November, the first ever scientific study on the impacts of local mercury controls, supported in part by the EPA, demonstrated that drastic reductions in mercury contamination are directly linked to the installation of mercury pollution controls on polluting facilities. Mercury controls on all power plants, not just the ones the energy industry decides are most affordable, are necessary to combat mercury's danger to public health across the nation.

"The Bush Administration has once again proved that its motto is 'Leave No Polluter Behind,' while it continues to put every child's health at risk."

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